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**SHAMIR AND LEVY HEAD OFF
POTENTIAL GOVERNMENT CRISES**

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Feb. 14 (JTA) -- Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir intervened swiftly with his own Likud party this week to defuse the first political crisis with its Labor partners since the unity coalition government was formed Dec. 22.

Shamir rushed to the defense of Finance Minister Shimon Peres, the Labor Party leader, who was under savage attack by Likud Knesset members for his proposed bailout of ailing Histadrut enterprises.

Shamir let it be known through his spokesman that he was supporting Peres.

He was joined by Deputy Premier David Levy, who reminded the bristling Likud critics Monday that Peres is finance minister in a unity government, and his policies are binding on the entire Cabinet, Likud and Labor alike.

For a short time, however, it seemed that Likud had a powerful tool with which to bash Labor two weeks before the Feb. 28 municipal elections.

They accused Peres of pandering to Histadrut to save its tottering economic empire.

Matters came to a head when Peres, after weeks of tense bargaining, averted a one-day general strike called by Histadrut for last Sunday that would have idled a million people and paralyzed the country.

The outstanding issue was cost-of-living increments to compensate wage earners for the soaring price index.

The facts and figures remain a matter of intense dispute.

It appears, however, that the two most powerful Histadrut bosses, Secretary General Yisrael Kessar and Haim Haberfeld, head of the trade unions department, settled for a rather anemic deal.

12 Percent Inflation

While inflation is running at about 12 percent, the result of slashed price subsidies and devaluation of the shekel, wage-earners will get only a 6 percent rise in their cost-of-living allowances.

Moreover, its payment will be spread over 13 months.

Kupat Holim, Histadrut's financially strapped health care agency, also will be helped, as will the trade union federation's unemployment and retraining program.

Peres claimed these outlays will cost the Treasury less than \$110 million and are in the national interest.

At a meeting of their Knesset faction Monday, some Likud members urged revolt, saying the party should not support the finance minister's proposals in parliament.

Peres responded quickly, telling a television interviewer that if Likud balked at his budget, the unity government was over.

At that point, Shamir and Levy moved in to cool the atmosphere.

Their straightforward support of Peres in the interests of the coalition reassured the political community.

**IDF GENERAL DISPUTES REPORTS
THAT SETTLERS FIELD MILITIAS**

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Feb. 14 (JTA) -- The Israel Defense Force high command denied charges by two Knesset members that Jewish settlers in the West Bank had organized militias to carry out reprisals against Arabs.

The allegations, by Yossi Sarid and Dedi Zucker of the dovish Citizens Rights Movement, were incorrect, according to Gen. Ehud Barak, the deputy chief of staff.

He confirmed Tuesday that there have been several cases of Jewish vigilantism in the administered territories, but said that those involved were brought to trial.

Barak stressed there are no paramilitary organization operating in the territories.

Sarid and Zucker persisted however, demanding that Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin investigate a number of mysterious cases in which Palestinian children have been killed or injured.

The IDF at the moment seems anxious to appease the settlers after the death last week of Albert Jerassi, a resident of Alfe-Menashe.

Jerassi, 38, was burned to death when his van caught fire, probably as a result of a firebomb attack.

There was a firebomb attack on a Jewish vehicle in the outskirts of Kfar-Sava, in Israel proper, over the weekend. No one was hurt.

IDF officers warned the settlers to take no security initiatives on their own, but the settler leaders said they would continue to patrol the roads until "the feeling of security is restored."

Meanwhile, the two Knesset members cited specific cases, not contested by the IDF, in which young Arabs were killed or injured by "mysterious explosives" or other weapons.

They want an investigation of the death of an 8-year-old Arab child in Tamoun village, and the wounding of his 14-year-old cousin by "an object which was thrown at them from a military jeep," according to their relatives.

A half-hour later, the Knesset members said, an 11-year-old girl was injured in the same village by a brick thrown at her from a "small white car, in which two bearded men wearing skullcaps were sitting."

Military sources said it was likely the children had been playing with abandoned live shells.

**BRONFMAN RELATES JEWISH CONCERNS
DURING MEETING WITH SHEVARDNAZDE**

By Susan Birnbaum

NEW YORK, Feb. 14 (JTA) -- World Jewish Congress President Edgar Bronfman and the organization's secretary-general, Israel Singer, met Monday with Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze to discuss issues of concern to the Jewish community.

The one-hour conference with the Soviet minister dwelt on all issues affecting Soviet Jews and also focused on the situation in the Middle East and the developing Soviet-Israeli relations, Elan Steinberg, WJC executive director, said in a telephone call from Moscow.

But despite the hoopla and dedication to the

advances of Jewish life in Moscow, disturbing reports coming from the Soviet Union tell of repression of Jews in other cities and the activities of violent anti-Semitic groups.

The WJC leaders were in Moscow for the opening Sunday of the Solomon Mikhoels Cultural Center, plans for which began with their meeting with the Soviet foreign minister and other senior Soviet officials last May.

A famous vestige of the old Yiddish State Theater was clearly apparent in the entry hall. Steinberg described as "overwhelming" the legendary theatrical scrim which Marc Chagall designed in the 1920s.

Shevardnadze is slated to visit the Middle East later this month, although he is not scheduled to go to Israel.

But the WJC reported that another Soviet official, Radomir Bogdanov, has been invited to Israel and would be the highest-ranking Soviet official to do so.

Bogdanov is the deputy director of the Institute of U.S.-Canadian Affairs, a body of considerable influence.

Meanwhile, a Jew in the Ukrainian city of Chernigov, who teaches Hebrew and collects documentation on the Nazi killing of Jews, was harassed by KGB officials, according to the National Conference on Soviet Jewry and the Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry.

The Student Struggle released the text of a complaint it received from Semyon Gurevich, addressed to the head of the KGB.

Gurevich wrote that he was questioned at the district OVIR emigration office about his trips to Moscow, "during which I showed an interest in Jewish culture, history and religion."

He said he was asked about trips by other Jews, who are collecting material about the Nazis' killing of Jews, and that he was asked to report on them.

Gurevich wrote that a KGB official, without a search warrant, confiscated cassettes with Jewish songs and Hebrew lessons, Jewish textbooks, his personal diary, notebooks, prison release certificate, photos of Jewish graves and plaster figures in the form of Jewish symbols.

He said he was "forced to bring to the KGB the mold for the figures" and was accused of "committing a crime against my homeland."

The National Conference on Soviet Jewry reported that violent thugs belonging to the anti-Semitic group Pamyat recently disrupted a meeting in Moscow at which Vitaly Korotich, editor of the popular weekly Ogonyok, was being nominated as a people's deputy of the USSR.

Ogonyok published eyewitness reports of the meeting at the Pravda Cultural Institute, at which Pamyat thugs screamed "Kill the Jews," assaulted women and engaged in hand-to-hand fighting with the meeting's organizers.

Soviet militiamen made no attempt to intervene, according to the report.

COURT GIVES BACK-TO-WORK ORDER TO BEZEK EMPLOYEES

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Feb. 14 (JTA) -- The 9,000 employees of Bezek, bowing to a court order, called off their three-day strike that was to have begun Tuesday morning.

The strike by the government-owned telecommunications corporation, would have affected Israel's electronic media, telephone and telegraph

communications.

A Tel Aviv district court judge issued no-strike orders at midnight Monday, complying with the request of Bezek's management who claimed the walkout was unwarranted and illegal.

The court, in fact, proved more amenable than Attorney General Yosef Harish.

Harish refused a request Monday by Communications Minister Gad Ya'acobi to invoke emergency regulations to prevent the strike.

Harish said it would be a misuse of the regulations because the walkout would not constitute an emergency.

The workers are demanding a 5 percent pay increase that was granted to all other public sector employees.

But the Treasury balked, on grounds that Bezek workers received a generous bonus last year, not paid to others.

Bezek, though government-owned, is an autonomous company that took over telecommunications from the Communications Ministry five years ago.

It negotiates its own labor contracts and claims it has been able to pay employees efficiency bonuses they would not have received as part of the government bureaucracy.

Labor unrest continued to simmer in Israel, however, as tugboat crews struck on Tuesday at Haifa and Ashdod, the two largest ports, in a wage dispute.

Ha'aretz, meanwhile, did not appear on newsstands Tuesday because the editorial staff was on strike, demanding extra pay for working with video display terminals.

SOVIET FREIGHTER DOCKS AT ASHDOD, FIRST IN ISRAELI WATERS SINCE 1967

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Feb. 14 (JTA) -- The 2,180-ton Russian freighter Vita Novitsky docked at Ashdod Monday, the first Soviet vessel in nearly 22 years to call at an Israeli port.

The freighter was at dockside only five hours, loading 40 tons of flour and foodstuffs and another 40 tons of clothing and other articles for victims of the earthquake that devastated Soviet Armenia last December.

The collection was organized by Israeli peace advocate Abie Nathan immediately after the disaster. Israel also sent rescue teams and supplies by air at the time.

The relief cargo, which includes toys for young children, was packed by volunteers in hundreds of cardboard cartons, each destined for a family deprived of their home and possessions by the earthquake.

Nathan wanted to charter a ship, but he was told by the Soviet authorities that direct sailings from Israel to a Russian port have been banned since Moscow severed all relations with Israel in 1967.

When the Vita Novitsky was diverted from her normal voyage to Ashdod, no one was more surprised than her 54-year-old skipper, Igor Nitkin.

He told reporters at the dock in Ashdod that the cabled orders were totally unexpected. "But this is a time of change, worldwide," the Soviet sea captain observed.

The loading of the relief supplies was witnessed by members of the Soviet consular delegation from Tel Aviv and Armenian church dignitaries.

SURVEY: DESPITE LITTLE CONTACT, JAPANESE NEGATIVE TOWARD JEWS

PALM BEACH, Fla., Feb. 14 -- Many Japanese hold negative attitudes toward Jews despite the fact that only one in 100 has had direct contact with them, according to a Gallup poll commissioned by the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith.

The findings were presented at a session of ADL's National Executive Committee meeting at the Breakers Hotel here last week.

Burton Levinson, ADL's national chairman, said the poll was commissioned in response to the publication of a number of anti-Jewish books and articles in Japan over the last two years.

The poll, conducted in late November, revealed that Japanese perceptions of Jewish personal traits and characteristics were formed on a second-hand basis, garnered mainly from television, books and newspapers.

In addition, the poll also found that Japanese perceptions of Israel are negative, including doubts about the country's "trustworthiness" and "commitment to peace."

Israel received the lowest rating of five countries -- West Germany, the United States, Saudi Arabia, the Soviet Union and Israel -- in terms of trustworthiness. The Soviet Union fared only marginally better than Israel.

However, the poll found that a full 81 percent of Japanese people felt their government should be neutral in its dealings with Arab nations and Israel.

Only 9 percent felt Japan should "lean toward the Arab side."

Among the negative character traits Japanese seem to ascribe to Jews are greediness and unfriendliness.

However, Jews were appraised more often than not as brave, hard-working and, to a lesser degree, intelligent and spiritual.

Jews were rated considerably below Christians and Buddhists by most Japanese surveyed.

Personal Dealings With Jews

But the 1 percent of Japanese people who have had personal dealings with Jews reacted to the poll's questions in a "positive or neutral" way.

Many of Japanese negative connotations of Jews are believed to come from William Shakespeare's "The Merchant of Venice," which is assigned reading in Japanese high schools.

However, 60 percent of those questioned said they had not read the book.

But of the 37 percent who said they had, 30 percent replied the play gave them "a bad feeling about Jews."

It was recorded, too, that 57 percent of the play's Japanese readers said it "didn't make much difference."

The survey concluded that three in 10 was "a far higher negative proportion than was recorded among those aware of the polemical books" -- the controversial anti-Semitic books.

"The 'Merchant's' influence, it would appear, is not inconsiderable," the survey finds.

The poll was conducted by the Nippon Research Center, an affiliate of Gallup. Personal interviews were conducted with 1,365 Japanese adults, age 18 and above.

It was designed by Potomac Associates, which is solely responsible for the interpretation and comments.

JEWISH AGENCY LEADER DIES

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Feb. 14 (JTA) -- Harry Rosen, longtime secretary-general of the Jewish Agency, has died here at the age of 77 and will be buried Wednesday.

Rosen, who was born in the United States, was an author and lecturer who specialized in gerontology and was active in fund-raising and communal service.

He came to Israel with his family to settle in 1967, after living in France for four years.

His efforts there led to the establishment of the French United Jewish Appeal.

Rosen also served as adviser to the chairman of the Jewish Agency Executive, often dealing with sensitive policy matters.

His several books included "But Not Next Door," which deals with interracial housing in the United States, and "Arabs and Jews in Israel," a study of Arab-Jewish relations.

KLEZMER VIRTUOSO DEAD AT 95

By Behnam Dayanim

NEW YORK, Feb. 14 (JTA) -- Dave Tarras, a clarinetist and a key figure in helping popularize the klezmer movement in America, died of pneumonia on Monday at age 95.

Tarras, born in the Ukraine of a long line of klezmer musicians, emigrated to the United States in 1921 to escape the persecution of Jews in his homeland.

"Klezmorim," as these musicians are known, perpetuate a unique brand of Yiddish folk music that utilizes mostly horns and accordions and that has pervaded European Jewish culture since the Middle Ages.

Henry Sapoznik, a prominent klezmer musician and leader of the Kapelye orchestra in New York, praised Tarras for having "created . . . a new form of Jewish music" and having given klezmer "a new venue in America."

Incorporating elements of American jazz without relinquishing his Yiddish roots, Tarras pioneered the use of the B-flat clarinet among klezmer players, abandoning the traditional E-flat and C clarinets.

He recorded for major labels, including Columbia, Decca and Victor, and accompanied some of the most popular Yiddish entertainers of the 1920s and '30s.

Sapoznik said there was "not an event in the lives of immigrant Jews in the first half of the twentieth century in America that Tarras didn't play at," and that a klezmer aficionado of the time "couldn't think of Jewish music without thinking of Dave Tarras."

AMOS OZ BOOK SETS RECORD

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Feb. 14 (JTA) -- Amos Oz, the internationally prominent Israeli author, has a new best-seller that his publisher says has broken a record for book sales in Israel.

His latest novel, "To Know a Woman," sold 45,000 copies since its initial appearance in book stores two weeks ago.

According to the publisher, Keter, no other book published in Israel ever sold that many copies in two weeks.

The reason may be obvious from the subject matter: sex and espionage.

ISRAEL LAUNCHES DRIVE TO GAIN SUPPORT OF AMERICAN JEWRY

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, Feb. 14 (JTA) -- The Israeli government is launching an effort to win the support of Diaspora Jewry -- especially in the United States -- for the diplomatic initiative for peace in the Middle East it plans to present the Bush administration.

Moshe Arad, Israel's ambassador to Washington, said Tuesday that world Jewish leaders will not be presented with a finished "blueprint" but will be asked for their own ideas.

The forum for this will be the Prime Minister's Conference on Jewish Solidarity with Israel, which Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir has scheduled for Jerusalem March 20-22. More than 1,000 Jewish leaders from around the world are expected to attend.

The conference will be held several days after Foreign Minister Moshe Arens visits Washington, and several weeks before Shamir goes to Washington in mid-April.

Arad said Jewish leaders will be able to express the concerns of their communities and in turn hear the concerns of the Israelis.

Arens said that "the final decision is with Israel," but repeatedly called the conference a dialogue in which the participants would not be asked to rubber stamp a position already decided upon.

Speaking at a meeting with reporters from the Jewish media at the Israel Embassy here, Arad indicated that Shamir would use the input of the Jewish leaders to help him develop the proposals he will make to the Bush administration when he goes to Washington.

Arad said Israel understands "that many American Jews -- for understandable reasons -- are clearly concerned with the image of Israel."

The ambassador did not directly mention Israel's handling of the Arab uprising on the West Bank and Gaza Strip, but later he said, "our responsibility is to control violence on the West Bank."

The theme of unity was stressed by Shamir in a letter he sent to Jewish leaders inviting them to join the steering committee for the conference.

Shamir noted that Israel now has a "government of unity," which has the support of 95 of the 120 members of the Knesset.

"In view of the recent developments in the Middle East, there is an urgent need to strengthen the relationship of solidarity between Israel and all the Jews of the world," Shamir said.

"The government of Israel expects the entire Jewish people to stand at Israel's side in its quest for peace, security and prosperity, which are all vital to the very existence and development of the world's one, and only, Jewish state," the prime minister wrote.

Arad said that the Israeli government knows that one of the causes for dissension between the Diaspora and Israel was the controversy over the "Who Is a Jew" amendment.

He said in his recent travels around the United States he found this concern still exists among American Jews over an amendment which would have recognized only conversions performed by Orthodox rabbis.

"'Who is a Jew' is no longer on the agenda of the leadership of the two major parties," Arad said.

FORMER SPEAKER SHLOMO HILLEL NAMED KEREN HAYESOD CHAIRMAN

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Feb. 14 (JTA) -- Shlomo Hillel, a Labor member of the Knesset and its former speaker, has been appointed world chairman of Keren Hayesod, the international fund-raising agency for Israel.

Hillel, 65, is expected to resign his Knesset seat to devote full time to his new duties.

He was defeated last Tuesday by fellow Laborite Avraham Shohat for chairmanship of the Knesset Finance Committee.

He lost a bid earlier to retain the office of speaker to Likud's Dov Shilansky, on a secret ballot of Knesset members.

Keren Hayesod conducts worldwide campaigns for Israel in all Diaspora countries except the United States, where the United Jewish Appeal runs campaigns for domestic Jewish, Israeli and other overseas needs.

The office of Keren Hayesod chairman has been vacant for a year.

Hillel's predecessor, Avraham Avihai of the General Zionists, resigned after the last World Zionist Congress. WZO Executive Chairman Simcha Dinitz filled the post in the interim.

Considered a hawk, Hillel was reported to belong to a group of Labor Party insurgents hoping to unseat party leader Shimon Peres.

Another appointment announced by the WZO Executive was former Gen. David Hagool, a General Zionist, who was named to head the Youth Aliya Department.

PALESTINIAN KILLED PLAYING WITH BOMB IN APPARENT ACCIDENT

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Feb. 14 (JTA) -- A Palestinian was killed in the West Bank town of Kabatiya on Monday when an explosive charge detonated in his hand. Two other townspeople were wounded in what appears to have been an accident.

The victims were handling the charge apparently without knowing what it was, Israeli authorities said.

The town was placed under curfew to maintain order while the incident is investigated.

Meanwhile, two Palestinians were seriously wounded in a clash between stone-throwers and Israel Defense Force soldiers in Rafah, in the southern Gaza Strip Monday.

The brother of one of the wounded men was killed by the IDF under similar circumstances a year ago.

Disturbances were also reported in East Jerusalem on Monday.

THATCHER WARY OF PLO

London Jewish Chronicle

LONDON, Feb. 14 (JTA) -- The Palestine Liberation Organization will have to demonstrate that it is the sole representative of the Palestinian people before Britain accepts it as such, Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher told the House of Commons Tuesday.

The prime minister, who meets here Wednesday with Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Arens, said the issue had to be addressed before negotiations can take place.

"The important thing is to concentrate on getting talks started," Thatcher stressed.